AVATAR

The Last Airbender

Show #303

BOOK THREE: Fire
CHAPTER THREE: "The Painted Lady"

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ACT ONE

EXT. DOWN RIVER - DAY

Momo is hovering over the water, looking for something. Suddenly, Aang's head pops out of the water behind Momo.

AANG
Momo!

Momo turns around, but Aang has already disappeared beneath the water. Momo flies over to where he just heard Aang, looking around, a bit confused. A few seconds later, Aang pops out of the water in a new location behind Momo.

AANG (cont'd)
(calling playfully)
Oh, Momo...

Momo quickly turns around, but again he's too late as Aang has just ducked beneath the surface! Momo starts to head to where he just heard Aang, but then he stops -- he's caught on to the game. He quickly turns around and pounces on Aang's head as he pops out of the water.

MOMO
(PLAYFUL SCREECH)

AANG
(SURPRISED SCREAM THEN PLAYFUL LAUGHING) You found me, buddy!

Appa floats up next to Aang and Momo. We reveal Sokka (who is fishing), Toph and Katara on Appa's back as Appa gently floats up river. We see that the kids are floating into an area of the river that is DIRTY AND POLLUTED. Aang and Momo jump onto Appa's back -- they are COVERED IN SLUDGE.

AANG (cont'd)
Hey guys, I think this river's polluted.

Aang Airbends the GUNK off himself and Momo.

SOKKA
Well that explains why I can't catch a fish around here. Because normally, my fishing skills are "off the hook!"

His joke meets silence.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Get it? Like a fishing hook...

Everyone looks at him, dumbly.

TOPH
Too bad your skills aren't "on the hook."

AANG/ KATARA/ TOPH
(LAUGHING)

Sokka just shakes his head sadly.

KATARA
It looks like we'll need to go somewhere else to get food. Assuming that'll fit into Sokka's master schedule...

Sokka unrolls his SCHEDULE and inspects it.

SOKKA
Hmmm... it's doable. But that means only two potty breaks today!

AANG
Hey, maybe we can get food there.

Aang points in the distance and further up the river the kids can see a small village.

EXT. RIVER - LATER

Aang covers/disguises Appa as the kids depart.

15A AANG 15A
Now you look just like a little hill with horns. Bye, buddy!

The kids emerge from the woods (without Appa, and Aang now wearing his headband) onto the shore of the river. They see that the village is actually FLOATING ON THE RIVER. This unique village is made up of floating houseboats. Many are connected together in the center of the river, forming something similar to a center of town. You can walk from one houseboat to the next -- like walking through an outdoor market. Other houseboats are scattered about on the river, separated from the rest. The kids walk onto a nearby dock for a better look at the village.

TOPH
I don't feel anything -- where's this village?

SOKKA
It's in the middle of the river!

DOCK (O.S.)
Sure is!

The kids are startled to see DOCK, a strange man in a striped shirt and hat, floating up to them on an old gondola raft.

DOCK (cont'd)
My name's Dock, mind if I ask who you are?

KATARA
We're, uh, from the Earth Kingdom colonies.

DOCK
(very interested)
Wow, colonials. Hop on, I'll give you a ride into town.

The kids shuffle on and Dock pushes them toward the village.

KATARA
Why do you guys live on the river?

DOCK
Because we're a fishing town. At least that's how it was before that factory moved in.

Dock points up river. In the distance, the kids see the top of a large factory pumping smoke into the air.

DOCK (cont'd)
Army makes their metal there. Moved in a few years ago and started gunking up our river. Now our little village is struggling to survive.

Dock pulls his gondola up to...

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - CONTINUOUS

The kids see that this village is EXTREMELY POOR. The houseboats are old and decrepit, the shops are almost empty, and poor, sick, and hungry people hang about. The kids climb off the gondola-raft.

AANG
Thanks for the ride.

As they walk through town, Katara is obviously affected by the conditions.

KATARA
Look at this place -- it's so sad.
(beat)
We have to do something to help.

SOKKA
No, we can't waste our time here. We have a bigger mission that we need to stay focused on. These people are on their own.

KATARA
<u>These people</u> are starving, but you turn your back on them! How can you be so cold and heartless?

SOKKA
I'm not turning my back, I'm just being realistic. We can't go around helping every rinky-dink town we wander into. We'll be helping them <u>all</u> by taking out the Firelord!

TOPH
Hey loudmouths, maybe we should be a little quieter when we talk about 'taking out the Firelord.'

Toph's censure puts an immediate chill on their heated argument. Sokka chimes in again, this time more discreetly.

SOKKA
Come on Katara, be reasonable about this. You know our mission has to come first...

Katara stews for a moment, then relents with a SHRUG.

KATARA
I guess so.

AANG
Let's just get what we need and go.

Sokka walks up to a nearby kiosk and RINGS a bell. A moment later, Dock arrives wearing a DIFFERENT HAT.

SOKKA
Hey Dock, you work here too?

DOCK
I'm not Dock, I'm Xu (PRON: shoe). Dock's my brother.

AANG
But we just saw you. You're even wearing the same clothes -- the only difference is your hat.

DOCK
Dock works on the docks -- that's why they call him Dock, and I work in the shop -- that's why they call me Xu.

AANG
I don't get it.

DOCK
Me neither! What can I get ya?

"Xu" proudly motions to his kiosk, which is mostly empty with just some dried, deformed fish, sickly-looking clams, and stringy river-weed. Sokka looks a little uneasy.

DOCK (cont'd)
Hey, I'll give you a special deal: if you buy three fish, I'll throw in a clam for free!

Sokka pokes at a clam and watches green stuff OOZE from it.

SOKKA
We'll just take the fish.

As Sokka pays for the fish...

SOKKA (cont'd)
Mind telling your brother we need a ride back to shore?

"Xu" bends down in the kiosk, DISAPPEARING for a moment. He reemerges a beat later as Dock (wearing the hat from before).

DOCK
(excited to see the kids)
Hey, colonials! My brother says you need a lift.

Sokka rolls his eyes and the group follows Dock. Katara lingers behind and a LITTLE BOY approaches her.

LITTLE BOY
Can you spare some food?

Katara looks at the poor little boy begging at her side. She takes out a dried fish and hands it to him.

KATARA
I wish I could help more.

Katara watches as the little boy takes the fish back to his SICK MOTHER. The boy sits on the ground next to her.

EXT. CAMPSITE OVERLOOKING TOWN - NIGHT

The kids have set up camp. Katara, Toph and Aang are purifying polluted water. Toph bends the dirt and metals out, Aang boils the water, and Katara bends the clean water into a skin sack. Sokka is nearby going over the schedule.

SOKKA
Our detour into town today has completely thrown off our schedule. It's going to take some serious finagling to get us back on track.

TOPH
Finagle away, oh schedule master.

SOKKA
Well for starters, it looks like we'll need to wake up forty-three minutes earlier every day.

KATARA
Forty-three minutes?

SOKKA
Look, we only have a few weeks to get to the Firelord in time for the invasion and the eclipse which, by the way, only lasts for eight minutes. And we just lost a whole day, so if we want to make up the time and stay on schedule we have to wake up early!

TOPH
Well, I'm not waking up early.

SOKKA
Or we could just cut out all of our eating breaks --

AANG/ KATARA/ TOPH
What?/ No way./ Forget it!

Sokka furrows his brow and scrutinizes the schedule. He suddenly SNAPS his fingers excitedly.

SOKKA
I got it! How's this: From now on we'll take food breaks and potty breaks at the same time.

Everyone looks at him like he's crazy.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Hey, it might be gross, but it's efficient. Either way, we have to leave here first thing tomorrow morning.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE OVERLOOKING TOWN - MORNING

Katara is inspecting Appa when Aang and Toph wake up.

AANG
What's the matter, Katara?

KATARA
I think Appa's sick.

Suddenly, Sokka hops out of his tent.

SOKKA
What, Appa's sick? That's awful.

TOPH
Wow Sokka, I didn't realize you cared so much.

SOKKA
Of course I care! I might as well just throw our schedule away now!

Sokka notices everyone looking at him angrily.

SOKKA (cont'd)
(forcing sympathy)
And I'm concerned because my big, furry friend doesn't feel well.

TOPH
He must have gotten sick from being in the polluted water.

AANG
He doesn't look sick.
(to Appa)
You okay, buddy?

Appa BELLOWS and Aang notices something. Aang opens Appa's mouth and pulls Appa's tongue out -- it's purple.

AANG (cont'd)
His tongue is purple -- that can't be good. Katara can you heal him?

KATARA
It looks like he needs some medicine. Maybe we can find the right herbs in town.

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - DAY

The kids walk through town and notice an EXCITED BUZZ amongst the people -- somehow this village is more upbeat.

TOPH
Is it just me, or does this place seem different?

AANG
Yeah, are the people... happier?

The kids walk up to the kiosk from yesterday. "Xu" is there.

SOKKA
Hey Xu, what's going on with everyone today?

DOCK
Something amazing happened last night. Food was delivered to our village by a mysterious and wonderful person -- the painted lady.

KATARA
The painted who now?

DOCK
The painted lady!

Xu picks up an old figurine/statue he now has displayed on his kiosk -- he shows it to the kids. Katara looks closely at the statue. It is of a woman with a uniquely painted face, wearing long robes and a hood.

DOCK (cont'd)
She's a part of our town's lore. They say she's a river spirit who watches over our town in times of need. I always thought she was just a legend -- until now!

The kids look around and notice the people of the village dusting off small statues and drawings of the painted lady, proudly displaying them.

SOKKA
See, we don't need to help these people -- they already have someone to help them.
(to "Xu")
All we need is medicine for our sick friend.

DOCK
Medicine? Sorry, all the medicine we have goes to the factory -- that's why there's so many sick people in our village.

KATARA
Looks like we need to stay another night so Appa can rest.

SOKKA
(SIGHS) I guess you're right.
(to "Xu")
You got any more food to sell?

DOCK
Would you like the one-headed fish or the two-headed fish?

SOKKA
Two-headed!
(off kids' reactions)
What? You get more for your money that way.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

It is a foggy night and the entire village is sound asleep. From across the river, a mysterious figure emerges from the woods -- we don't see her face, but it's the painted lady. We watch as her silhouette seemingly floats across the water through the fog, heading toward the village. The painted lady steps onto the village and enters...

INT. RUNDOWN CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

The painted lady gently places her hands on one patient and then another, healing them (none of them wake up). The painted lady sets small Avatar-style bottles of medicine near the patients.

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - CONTINUOUS

The painted lady exits the clinic and sees the little boy from before sleeping next to his sick mother. The painted lady places her hands on the little boy's sleeping mother, healing her. The painted lady turns to leave but suddenly stops when she hears...

LITTLE BOY
Thank you, painted lady.

The painted lady doesn't turn around, but we see for the first time who she is -- the painted lady is Katara! Katara bends fog around herself and disappears.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - DAY

The kids are standing at "Xu's" kiosk -- Sokka is repeatedly RINGING the bell when Dock appears (i.e., he's wearing the Dock hat.)

SOKKA
Hi Dock. Is Xu around?

DOCK
Let me check. (STARTS WHISTLING)

Dock walks a lap behind the kiosk, WHISTLING as he goes, and he re-emerges from the other side wearing the "Xu" hat.

DOCK (cont'd)
(FINISHES WHISTLING) Hey there, back again, are ya?

TOPH
We need more food. Our friend is still sick and we can't leave until he's better.

DOCK
Oh, well that's too bad. Maybe if you guys are lucky, the painted lady will visit you in the night and heal your friend.

SOKKA
And maybe she'll cook us a midnight snack and we'll all have a sing-a-long!

DOCK
Yeah, may-be! You know, last night she visited us again, healed most of our sick folks.

The kids look around, noticing a festive mood in the town.

AANG
Is that why this place seems so festive?

DOCK
Yep, it's all because of the painted lady!

KATARA
Can you believe how much an entire village can be affected by one lady! -- I mean spirit.

SOKKA
Well, I hope she returns every night, otherwise this place would go right back to the way it was.

KATARA
Why would you say that? Look how much better off these people are.

SOKKA
Yeah, now. But without her, they wouldn't be able to fend for themselves.
(teasing)
If she really wanted to help, she would use her spirit magic to blow up that factory. (SPOOKY SPIRIT SOUNDS, THEN EXPLOSION SOUND)

AANG
Spirit magic doesn't work that way, Sokka.
(beat)
It's more like: (DIFFERENT SPIRIT SOUNDS, THEN EXPLOSION SOUND)

Katara lets this sink in and as she stares at the factory in the distance, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE OVERLOOKING TOWN - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Katara's eyes open and she looks around before quietly climbing out of her sleeping bag. She silently stuffs leaves into her sleeping bag, making it look like she is still inside. Katara grabs another bag and sneaks off to...

EXT. AWAY FROM CAMPSITE - MOMENTS LATER

Katara takes a long, hooded robe out of her bag and puts it on. She also takes some make-up out of her bag and begins putting some on her face, resembling the painted lady.

EXT. CAMPSITE OVERLOOKING TOWN - MOMENTS LATER

Momo is awake. He begins to follow Katara's trail.

MOMO
(CHITTERING)

Aang wakes up and approaches Momo.

AANG
What's the matter, buddy?

Aang looks towards the river where Momo is looking, and to Aang's surprise, he sees the painted lady on the shore.

AANG (cont'd)
It's her!

Aang quickly runs toward the river.

EXT. RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

Aang arrives at the shore of the river. The painted lady is further up the shore when Aang excitedly calls to her...

AANG
Hello, painted lady spirit!

Katara, who is caught off guard, runs away. Aang chases her.

AANG (cont'd)
(yelling after her)
Excuse me -- I don't mean to bother you, but my friend's sick and we're on kind of a tight schedule!

Aang chases her through the woods, then to the river. Katara quickly (and secretly) bends across the surface of the water. Aang stops at the shore for a beat and yells to her.

AANG (cont'd)
Wait, but I'm the great bridge between your world and mine!

Using cool bending, Aang chases after her across the water.

AANG (cont'd)
I know Hei Bei! We're close, personal friends!

AANG (cont'd)
Hey!

Eventually, the chase leads to...

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - CONTINUOUS

Katara continues to flee, using awesome, stealthy bending action! Possibly the chase is "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" -style, which includes floating on water and maybe even chasing through, around, and on top of houseboats (silently). This chase should not wake any of the villagers.

Katara heads back across the water to...

EXT. RIVER - CONTINUOUS

She runs onto shore and into the adjacent woods. Katara stops, thinking that she got away. Suddenly, Aang appears in front of her, hanging upside-down from a tree.

AANG
My name's Aang, I'm the Avatar.

Aang hops down from the tree and is face to face with Katara. But because of her disguise, Aang doesn't recognize her -- Katara realizes this and does her best spirit voice.

KATARA
(in spirit voice)
Well hello, Avatar. I wish I could talk but I am very busy.

AANG
Yeah, me too. I hate that.
(looking closely)
You know, you're really pretty for a spirit. I don't get to meet too many spirits, but the ones I do meet -- not very attractive.

Katara tries to keep her head down, while Aang looks at her.

KATARA
(still in spirit voice)
(NERVOUS LAUGH) Thank you but--

AANG
You seem familiar, too.

Aang is looking at her face closer.

KATARA
(spirit voice)
A lot of people say that.

AANG
No. You <u>really</u> seem familiar.

KATARA
(spirit voice)
Look, I should really get going.

As Katara turns to leave, one of her hair-loopies suddenly falls out of her hood and in front of her face. Katara freezes as Aang stares at the hair-loopy. A beat later, the other hair-loopy also falls in her face. Aang suddenly realizes who it is.

AANG
Katara?

KATARA
(in normal voice)
Hi, Aang.

AANG
You're the painted lady?! But how?

KATARA
I wasn't at first -- I was just trying to help the village. But since everyone thought that's who I was anyway -- I guess I just kind of became her.

Aang is putting it all together.

AANG
So you've been sneaking out at night?
(beat)
Wait, is Appa even sick?

KATARA
He might be sick of the purple berries I've been feeding him, but other than that, he's fine.

AANG
I can't believe you lied to everyone so you could help these people...

KATARA
I'm sorry, I know I shouldn't have--

AANG
No, I think it's great! You're like a secret hero.

KATARA
Well if you want to help, there's one more thing I have to do...

EXT. FACTORY - NIGHT

Katara and Aang hide in the bushes, looking at the factory. This is a large factory-style building located on the shore of the river. There are lots of pipes and large smoke stacks, pumping smoke into the sky.

AANG
You want to destroy this factory?

KATARA
Yes. Sokka was just kidding, but he was right. Getting rid of this factory is the only way to help these people permanently.

Aang and Katara sneak past a few FIRE NATION GUARDS. As they slink along the side of the factory, they pass a large pipe that is DUMPING WASTE into the river. The kids look at this for a beat before entering...

INT. FACTORY - MOMENTS LATER

The factory is empty, but fires still burn in large furnaces. There is smoke everywhere, piles of metals and pipes running every which way.

Katara and Aang work together to sabotage the smelting plant. Possibly, they plug-up the drain that empties into the river. The built-up pressure from this could cause an explosion, destroying the factory.

Or, Katara and Aang could stop the fires from burning inside the furnaces (using Water and Airbending), and break the furnaces.

(Another possibility is that we show the kids beginning their acts of sabotage, then we cut outside to see the final results...)

EXT. FACTORY - LATER

As Katara and Aang sneak out of the factory, we watch as the large pipe STOPS DUMPING its waste into the river. (Maybe there is an explosion or some other dramatic moment of finality for the factory.)

EXT. CAMPSITE OVERLOOKING TOWN - DAWN

Katara is now in her regular outfit as she and Aang are quietly sneaking back into their campsite. Katara motions to Aang to be quiet.

KATARA
(whispering)
Shh. We don't want to wake Sokka--

As Katara says this, she steps into the campsite and sees that Sokka and Toph are both already awake.

KATARA (cont'd)
(awkward)
Hi, Sokka. We were just out on a morning walk.

SOKKA
Oh really, a morning walk?

Sokka picks up Katara's sleeping bag and dumps out the leaves. Katara doesn't know what to say.

SOKKA (cont'd)
I know you're the painted lady, I know you've been sneaking out at night and I know you've been lying about Appa and feeding him purplizing tongue berries!

Sokka motions to Toph who holds up a bag of berries and sticks her tongue out, which we see is purple.

TOPH
Ahhhhh.

SOKKA
Katara, what you did put our whole mission in jeopardy! We're leaving right now!

Katara sadly puts her head down as she gathers her stuff. Sokka looks to Aang.

SOKKA (cont'd)
And how long did you know about this?

AANG
(innocently)
Hey, I just found out this morning.

Sokka eyeballs Aang as he joins Katara in gathering the supplies. Suddenly, everyone stops when they hear a STRANGE SOUND coming from the river.

The kids look towards the river and see that the sound is coming from Fire Nation soldiers riding on cool AVATAR-STYLE JET SKIS, heading towards the village.

TOPH
What's going on?

AANG
Fire Nation soldiers are heading to the village.

Sokka looks accusingly at Katara.

SOKKA
What did you do?

KATARA
(innocently)
I kind of destroyed their factory.

SOKKA
You what?!

KATARA
It was your idea!

SOKKA
I was joking -- I also said to use spirit magic and made funny noises!
(beat)
Did you even think this through? The army's going to blame the villagers -- they're headed there right now to get revenge!

KATARA
Well what was I supposed to do?!

SOKKA
Leave! Do nothing!

KATARA
No -- I will never <u>ever</u> turn my back on people who need me.

Now Sokka is silenced by her fierce determination.

KATARA (cont'd)
I'm going down to the village. And I'm going to do whatever I can.

She turns to leave.

SOKKA
Wait. I'm coming too.

KATARA
I thought you didn't want to help.

SOKKA
You need me. And I will never turn my back on you.

Katara is suddenly very happy.

KATARA
Sokka, you really do have a heart.

She hugs her brother for a beat. We reveal that in the background Aang has been moved by this...

AANG
(choking back smiling tears)
He really does have a heart, doesn't he?

He turns to Toph for confirmation. She PUNCHES him in the arm.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. RIVER - MORNING

The kids watch from shore, hiding behind trees, as the Fire Nation army rounds up the villagers.

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - CONTINUOUS

The villagers are NERVOUS AND SCARED as they are surrounded by a few Fire Nation soldiers. A Fire Nation GENERAL appears in front of the villagers.

GENERAL
I thought we could live as neighbors in peace, but I guess I was wrong. You steal our food, our medicine, and then you destroy our factory.

Dock appears from behind the villagers.

DOCK
We didn't do any of that!

Dock disappears behind some villagers. A beat later "Xu" emerges and says...

DOCK (cont'd)
Yeah, the painted lady brought us food -- she's the one that healed our sick, not your medicine!

The general obviously doesn't believe him. He picks up a small statue of the painted lady and looks at it.

GENERAL
Oh right, the mysterious painted lady did it. And I suppose she drew the army emblem on your containers, too?

The general motions to a pot of rice that has the Fire Nation army EMBLEM on it. Then he throws the statue, SHATTERING it.

GENERAL (cont'd)
This is a town of thieves and liars!

The general FIREBENDS at a houseboat, catching it on fire.

GENERAL (cont'd)
Where's your painted lady now?
(to one of his men)
(MORE)

GENERAL (cont'd)
We're going to cure the world of this wretched village.

A couple soldiers jump on their jet skis and head up river.

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - LATER

The village continues to burn as more Fire Nation soldiers arrive on their Avatar-style jet skis. The villagers are starting to panic when suddenly, the flames mysteriously go out.

GENERAL
Light it again!

A soldier Firebends at the houseboat, but again after a moment the flames mysteriously go out!

EXT. VILLAGE ON RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

The villagers and Fire Nation soldiers watch as a THICK AND EERIE FOG rolls toward them, off the water. The soldiers begin to get a little spooked.

SOLDIER #1
Look at that. Where's it coming from?

SOLDIER #2
I don't know. Something strange is going on.

Soon the fog settles in around them, blocking the sunlight and making it nearly impossible to see.

LITTLE BOY
(whispering)
It's the painted lady, she's coming.

GENERAL
There is no painted lady!

Suddenly, there are strange MOANING sounds, and loud BOOMING sounds -- so loud, they RUMBLE the village. There is even an eerie REED sound adding to the spooky atmosphere.

We REVEAL that the booming sounds are coming from Toph, who is Earthbending nearby; the moaning is coming from Appa who is flying around the fog, and the strange reed sound is coming from Sokka who is riding on Appa's back, playing a reed (or flute).

The soldiers look around, barely able to see anything in the dense fog. The strange sounds are freaking them out even more.

SOLDIER #1
What is that sound?

SOLDIER #2
Maybe it is her.

Suddenly, the strange sounds end and the fog begins to split open, revealing the river. No one moves as they look towards the river. There is a beat. Then slowly, out of the fog, the painted lady appears -- floating on the surface of the water, towards them. The soldiers are frozen with fear.

The painted lady steps onto the village, and walks toward the soldiers -- the general is standing behind his men. The villagers are nearby, watching. The general pushes a couple of his soldier to face her.

GENERAL
Do something!

They are frightened as they approach with their swords drawn. Katara lifts her hand and the soldiers stop a few feet away, scared. She does a quick motion and in a BLUR, the soldiers' helmets FLY OFF their heads! The soldiers grab their heads in disbelief. We reveal Aang, hidden in the fog, who just did the helmet trick with Airbending.

The two soldiers turn and run. The others soldiers are also getting antsy.

GENERAL (cont'd)
(to his men)
Stand your ground!

The soldiers stay put. Then slowly, the painted lady lifts her hands, and out of the water behind her appears GIANT WATER HANDS. As Katara moves her hands, the water hands move in unison. Katara swipes her arm and in a single move, the water-hands STRIKE THE JET SKIS down the river.

Now the soldiers are in panic-mode. When Katara lifts her water-hands again, the soldiers dive into the filthy river and swim for their lives. The general is the only one left, still defiant.

GENERAL (cont'd)
(to Katara)
I'll take care of you myself.

The general begins Firebending at the painted lady, but to his surprise, she leaps up, FLYING IN THE AIR!

We reveal Aang in the fog, Airbending Katara into the air.

The general revs up to Firebend again, but before he has a chance to, Katara SMACKS him into the water with her water-hands. She lowers herself back down.

The general swims for a jet ski, but when he gets on it, Katara freezes it in place and then BLASTS it out of the water -- the general is flung through the air and back into the dirty water. The painted lady floats on top of the water to the general who is treading water and clearly frightened. She looks down on him as he cowers.

KATARA
Leave this village and never come back.

Katara Waterbends a huge wave that washes the general down the river.

The villagers are all CHEERING and they approach Katara as she steps back onto the village. The fog is now gone as everyone crowds around her to thank her. Katara's make-up is beginning to wash away.

LITTLE BOY
I knew you'd come!

VILLAGERS
Thank you!/ Painted lady, you're the best!

Dock steps up to Katara and shakes her hand.

DOCK
Me and my brothers really owe you a lot.
(noticing)
Hey, wait a minute... I know you. You're not the painted lady, you're that colonial girl.

Everyone becomes silent and looks closely at Katara.

LITTLE BOY
Yeah, you're the lady that gave me a fish.

DOCK
You've been tricking us! You're a Waterbender...

Katara and the kids are now standing next to each other, backing away from the villagers who are suddenly VERY ANGRY.

VILLAGERS
She's a Waterbender!/ How dare you act like our painted lady!/ (MORE ANGRY YELLING)

Sokka suddenly jumps in to defend his sister.

SOKKA
Maybe she is a Waterbender, but she was just trying to help you!

The villagers are suddenly silent.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Because of her, that factory won't be polluting your river and the army is gone! You should be down on your knees thanking her!

Katara stops her brother.

KATARA
Sokka, it's okay.

She turns to the villagers who are now silent.

KATARA (cont'd)
I shouldn't have acted like someone I wasn't and I shouldn't have tricked you, but I felt like I had to do something.
(looking around)
It doesn't matter if the painted lady is real or not, because your problems are real and this river is real. You can't wait around for someone to help you -- you have to help yourself.

The villagers seem to be coming around. There is a long beat then...

DOCK
She's right.
(beat)
But what should we do?

Toph throws her voice, acting like a villager.

TOPH
(throwing her voice)
Maybe we can clean the river.

DOCK
(as Xu)
Yeah, we can clean the river!

VILLAGERS
Then the fish'll come back / (HAPPY AND EXCITED MUMBLING)

Suddenly, the villagers are all happy again. Dock approaches Katara.

DOCK
Thank you. You know, you're not so bad for a Waterbender.

SOKKA
You wouldn't mind keeping that a secret, by the way, would you?

DOCK
No problem! Keeping my mouth shut is a personal specialty.

Sokka looks relieved.

DOCK (cont'd)
My brother Xu, on the other hand -- he's a blabbermouth!

Sokka smacks his head.

KATARA
So Dock are you going to help us clean?

DOCK
No ma'am. I'm going to get my other brother, Bushi -- he loves cleaning rivers!

Dock quickly puts on a third different hat right in front of Aang.

DOCK (cont'd)
Alright, I'm Bushi, let's get some river cleaning done!

AANG
A-ha! I knew it -- I knew you were the same guy! You're the shop owner and the boat guy!

DOCK
(as Bushi)
Oh, you must be talking about my brothers, Dock and Xu.

AANG
(frustrated)
No, I just saw you -- you switched hats and called yourself a different name!

DOCK
Ohhh. You know who does that? My brother Dock.
(whispering)
He's crazy.

Dock walks off, leaving Aang even more frustrated.

EXT. RIVER - MONTAGE - DAY

The kids help the villagers clean up the polluted river. Aang, Toph and Katara are bending the water clean -- like they were doing earlier at the campsite, but now on a much larger scale.

Momo and Sokka are down river standing on rocks. They are trying to scoop out any sludge before it continues down river. Sokka tries to scoop too much sludge and it pulls him off the rock. Sokka emerges out of the water, covered in sludge -- Momo flies above him.

The entire village is working together. The villagers use their houseboats and their nets to make screens, filtering the water. Some Firebenders are boiling water, etc.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE OVERLOOKING TOWN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Katara wakes up and looks around. She crawls out of her sleeping bag and heads to...

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

Katara walks to the water's edge, looking at the village in the distance. She bends down and puts her hands in the water, scooping water out to drink.

She suddenly sees something in the reflection of the water. Katara quickly looks up and standing in front of her, on top of the water, is THE REAL PAINTED LADY SPIRIT!

Katara drops the water and just stares at the spirit in awe. The spirit bends down to Katara and whispers...

PAINTED LADY
Thank you.

Katara doesn't say anything but just watches as the spirit turns around and walks away, disappearing into the water.

END OF SHOW